

DEW OF LITTLE THINGS

CHUCK'S
AUNT PAULINE

BY
EVELYN P. JOHNSON

DEW OF LITTLE THINGS

By
Evelyn P. Johnson

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by
Evelyn P. Johnson

Price: \$2.00

Published by:
WRITER'S NOTES & QUOTES
Calhoun City, Mississippi

DEDICATION

This collection of poems is lovingly dedicated to Drik, my husband, who is my severest critic yet my most loyal 'fan'; to my three daughters, Bobbie Evelyn Hagerman, Dorothy Nell Crawford, and Frances Ethel Lee, whom I consider my greatest 'poems'; and to Mrs. Jewel Ball Hardin, my High School English teacher whose encouragement nurtured the creative urge which still burns within me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their having given first publication to certain poems in this book, grateful acknowledgement is made to the editors of AMERICAN BARD, BUNTINGS, CANDOR, CAPPER'S WEEKLY, CLARION LEDGER, (Jackson, Miss.), COFFEEVILLE (Miss.) COURIER, COMMERCIAL APPEAL, DAILY MEDITATION, JACKSON (Miss.) DAILY NEWS, KANSAS CITY POETRY MAGAZINE, LYRIC MISSISSIPPI, MONITOR HERALD (Calhoun City, Miss.), OUTDOORS MISSISSIPPI, PROGRESSIVE FARMER, SCIMITAR & SONG, SOUTHERN OBSERVER, THINK TANK, 'TIL 8 STORIES, and WEE WISDOM.

INTRODUCTION

Evelyn Pauline Johnson (nee Barker) was born in Calhoun County, Mississippi, on February 21, 1916. She attended public schools, and graduated from *Calhoun County Agricultural High School* in 1933.

Evelyn was married to Robert Lee Hamilton in October, 1933, and to this union were born three daughters. The casualties of World War Two left Evelyn a widow, and for twelve years she lived quietly, caring for her children and writing as a past-time. It was during this period that she began to write for publication and also established the magazine now entitled *WRITER'S NOTES & QUOTES*.

On July 11, 1956, Evelyn married E. H. (Drik) Johnson, a professional free-lance writer. Since that time Evelyn and her husband have worked as a team in editing and publishing their 'little' magazine for writers, and they frequently collaborate with each other in writing articles for various publications.

Although Evelyn's chief interest in the field of writing is in poetry, she also writes some fiction, articles, quizzes and other filler material, and her prose writings have appeared in many magazines including: *AMERICAN MAGAZINE*, *FARM JOURNAL*, *PROGRESSIVE FARMER*, *SUNDAY SCHOOL JOURNAL*, *THESE TIMES*, *FAMILY WEEKLY*, and others.

One of her *GUIDEPOST* articles was reprinted in ninety-three newspapers by the *Des Moines Register & Tribune Syndicate* in 1961.

For more than a year Evelyn served as a news correspondent for a Mississippi daily newspaper. And for more than ten years she was a regular columnist for three weekly newspapers. In 1953, and again in 1955, Evelyn's newspaper column won her a *Certificate of Special Merit* in the 'Star Scribes of the South' Contest sponsored by the *PROGRESSIVE FARMER MAGAZINE*.

Evelyn first began to write poetry and verse while she was a student in high school. During this time a number of her poems were published in the school paper and in local newspapers, and she was elected Class Poet of her graduating class.

In later years Evelyn joined the *Mississippi Poetry Society*, and was an active member of it for approximately seven years. She won several prizes in contests sponsored by the Society, and many of her poems appeared in the Society's publications.

DEW OF LITTLE THINGS is Evelyn's first published book of poetry. The poems in this volume have been selected from among the hundreds which Evelyn has written. Some of the poems were written during Evelyn's high school days; others were written more recently.

Evelyn is a lover of nature, of humanity, of life, and of God, and she finds the 'dew of little things' refreshingly lovely and dear to her heart.

In recent years she has spent much of her time encouraging beginning writers, and has done so at considerable sacrifice to her own writing career. However, she would not have it otherwise, for she is happiest when serving others.

Years ago Evelyn found the following verse in an old trunk containing family keepsakes. This acrostic was written in 1840 by her great-grandfather to Jane K. Mitchell as a proposal of marriage. Jane accepted the proposal. Perhaps it is from these ancestors that Evelyn inherited her love for versifying.

AN ACROSTIC

by

C. D. Vanhorn

J ustice points to you alone,
A nd I claim you for my own;
N ow one word from you would give
E very charm that life can have.

K now that what I write is true,
M eaning all I say to you;
I am in love, as you can see,
T hink of this and then of me.
C an you bless me with that word,
H and and heart can you afford?
E ach to pledge in faith with mine,
L ove our hearts will combine.

--E. H. J.

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Out of yesteryear...

TEARS

I wept for things I could not get,
in yesteryears;
For gems and rings I had regret. But
now, in tears,
I see I had it all,
And wishes, great or small,
Were made in vain.

I gave you up, it had to be;
The Lord above knew best, and we
Are left alone, to weep in memory.

THOUGHTS AT NIGHT

Through the dark and lonely hours of night,
I seek a refuge for my aching heart;
Sad, bereft, and well-aware my plight,
I seek a solace no one can impart.

Thoughts creep in and start me on the way
Of treading backward through the early years,
Over memories of yesterday...
I find relief in ever-cleansing tears.

AUDITION*

Lights off.

The first hush falls.

All eyes turn to the glowing circle
Where one tinted light beams softly
Downward on the stage.

Then.....

A rustling movement

As a young girl comes on ...

A young girl, hesitant, shy, but lovely
In her first formal dress,
Comes into the pastel light.

With a suppressed breath of anticipation
The audience leans forward,
Alert to hear the first strains
Of preludes, marches, minuets.

One listener sits alone,
Head high with pride
As she hears the music,
Beautiful and heart-stirring...

A mother
Sees her daughter in performance
Of the great art.

How fraught with memory
Is this exultant moment!
Memory of the player's father
Whose pride and joy would swell
As does her own,
If he could but hear and see
As he waits on the shores
Of Eternity.

**(For Bobbie, Dot, and Fran.)*

CRUMBLING FORTRESS

My years, it seems, have been a wall
Of stone along the privet rows.
The mortar crumbles in the cracks
Beneath the sniping of my foes.
It once was easy to be strong--
Resistant to the pebbles thrown;
Serene in strength, I did not fear
For I was young, and hardly grown.
Defences falling, heart laid bare,
I make this hesitating plea:
God, turn aside their blows before
This wall and I become debris!

*IN MEMORIAM**

(Roy Lamar Barker, killed in action,
July 15, 1918, World War I.)

Brother, dear, you gave your life
For this old country of ours;
And now you've gone to dwell
In happier lands, in lovelier bowers.
I cannot remember how you looked
The day you went away,
But I'll know you when we meet
In the Land of perfect Day.
Though from us you have departed,
You dwell in the Land of Joy,
And I hear the angels whisper:
'Sleep on--in peace--dear Roy.'

*{Written in 1930.)

TRIBUTE

With bowed heads and tear-dimmed eyes,
We stood and watched while solemn rites
Were said for those brave lads who stood
On watch for us through stormy nights.

They stood on guard in foreign lands
And dreamed, through sound of fire and blast,
Of days when wars would cease to be
And they'd be going home at last.

The war is over, their dreams came true;
That last trip home was made;
Now we must strive to hold the peace
For which their lives have paid.

OUR BABY

Two blue eyes and a button-nose,
Soft, elfin fingers and wiggly toes,
Ensnaring hearts wherever she goes,

--That's our baby!

A round little head with silken hair,
She rules the house quite unaware,
Yet -- a perfect answer to our prayer --
Is our baby!

I REMEMBER, PAPA

Some treasure keepsakes, tissue-wrapped
and ribboned,
To fondle as they dream about the past;
But I have treasures tucked within my heart:
The legacy of love you left for me.
My keepsakes are more personal and lasting,
For I recall your ready, crooked grin,
The way you wore your hat, your step behind
the plow,
Choice bits of table-talk we knew the while
We shared those years which God allotted
you.
The deep-rooted love, endearing names you
gave
Each child of us, the way you made us
laugh
When tears welled close ... these are the
wealth I own
As warmth against the chilling loneliness
That I shall know in days when I'm grown
old.

OUR CHILD

Tiny feet that toddle everywhere I go,
Tiny lips that question more than I can
know,
Tiny hands caress me, my baby's love to
show--
Just a tiny tot, but precious,
Is the child we love.

LET ME SING

"Talk happiness. The world is sad enough without your woe." -Wilcox

If I could wield a gifted pen,
And write my thoughts in singing rhyme,
Could pen a verse of happiness,
Then life for me would be sublime.

I'd like to sing of pleasant things,
Of love and joy and peace on earth,
Of babes at play on grassy leas,
And children romping in their mirth.

My songs would never weep nor mourn,
Nor hold for a man a trace of tears;
Instead my pen would ever sing
Of finer things throughout the years.

TO MY MOTHER*

Faithful and loving, a good, true friend,
Always willing a helping hand to lend,
A comforting, cheering word always to say,
A pal and guide through every day.

Always when in trouble to her I confide,
She's always waiting to be my guide.
She's always pleasant, smiling, sweet:
This mother of mine I wish you could meet.

*(Written in 1930)

Into the light...

OUT OF DARKNESS

I was an infant with a cry;
I courted close the Muse's light.
A masterpiece to leave behind...
A lofty poem ... I longed to write.

Where was the talent given all?
Where was success? I called her name
And penned each line in hopefulness
That I would win immortal fame.

My prose was weak, my verse was cold,
And neither seemed the world to touch,
Because (I did not know it then)
I made my pen a verbal crutch.

I echoed other poets' thoughts,
I wrote of things I did not know;
My words were stilted, unevoked
By heart's emotion, love's bright glow.

Then Jesus came into my life,
My soul was lifted to the stars;
The dormant Muse was freed at last
When Love broke through the silent bars.

Now I can write of past despairs
And brighten lives with hopeful rays,
For I can cite the rainbow's glow
That follows all our rainy days.

I look on life and find it good;
My heart within my bosom sings,
For we may rise on stepping stones
Of Christian love to higher things.

RESURRECTION

Why must a thing of beauty die?
But does it? Or does it merely lie
Like flowers wilting in the fall,
Awaiting resurrection's call.

Why does a thing of beauty die?
To live again is the reason why;
Upon us all the tomb must close,
That we may rise -- as Christ arose!

IF WE BELIEVE

This very world a prison is
When faith grows weak,
And bitterness binds our tongues;
We cannot speak
Of God's great truths. We doubt
Ourselves, and all
Who love us. Sunshine dims,
Dark clouds appall;
And we in blindness stumble,
Search foothold, and grope
Our way through wilderness that seems
To hold no hope.

We forget His words -- His promise
To those who grieve;
There is a comfort -- a solace --
If we believe!

HIS WILL, NOT MINE

Who am I to question the hand of God
Which moves mysteriously through each day?
I look, as through a glass darkly ...
Look, have faith, and pray.
For what can I ask of His Grace?
Wealth can corrupt, and fame
Holds nothing for me; it is a deeper
Need I ask in His holy name:

A need for strength to meet each day's demands;
To do my bit to better all humanity;
A need for patience, love, and hope,
These are the things I seek of Him.
I would know love and light and living,
That I may show my gratitude
For all His gifts ... by giving.

SILENT SYMPHONY

Who sings a song within his heart
Finds God through all his days;
He may be happier far than one
Who gives but outward praise.

DAWN OF ETERNAL DAY

The darkest hour of night, they say,
Comes just before the dawn;
If this be true, dear Lord, I pray,
Please leave us not alone.

Be with us, Lord, throughout the day,
And lead our steps a-right;
We cannot hope to find the way
Without Thy guiding light.

Forsake us not through darkest years
Lest we should go astray;
Oh, heal our wounds and dry our tears,
Till dawn of that great Day.

TELL YOUR NEIGHBOR

In this day of toil and trouble,
As we rush from place to place,
Do we visit with our neighbor?
Do we show a smiling face?

Must we hurry on our journey,
Looking not from side to side,
Knowing not our next-door neighbor
In the town where we reside?

Let us pause for just a moment,
Loose the tension from the air,
Spread a little friendly sunshine ...
Tell our neighbor that we care!

ENTREATY

I would not wound with my tongue--
Help me, Jesus, kind words to say;
I would not sin with stumbling feet--
Lead me, Lord, that I do not stray.

So that my hands commit no wrong,
Let me find Christian deeds to do;
Keep my eyes from all that's evil--
Help me daily to look to You.

Let my ears hear only gladness
As I sing praises to my Lord,
And my mind rest in serenity
As I trust Thy Holy Word.

NOR WALK WITH AIMLESS FEET

There is a place in life for all
To make God's plan complete;
No man need be devoid of good,
Nor walk with aimless feet.

For as we walk along the way,
Someone is sure to find
His own pathway affected
By the tracks we leave behind.

Then blaze your trail with friendly deeds
To help some fellowman,
For no one walks with aimless feet
Who follows God's own Plan.

IF

If I can lift one lonely heart
And make one person glad,
Can move one from despondency,
Then life will not be bad.

If I can brighten just one hour
For one whose days are drear,
I'll feel that I have done a bit
To spread sunshine and cheer.

Nature unseals man's eyes
and purifies his heart.

SOFT SUMMER NIGHT

I know that I can never write
A poem as lovely as the night,
When velvet folds of ebon-dark
Are studded with the fire-fly's spark.
The katydid's monotony,
The croaking bullfrogs' harmony,
The droning sound of dragon-fly
All blend into a lullaby.
A nature rhyme -- soft summer night --
A poem no human hand can write.

ODE TO SPRING*

A breath of freshness
In the air,
A blaze of color everywhere;
An urge to till this good rich earth,
To watch new beauty spring to birth.
The will to rise and start anew,
A wish for worthwhile things to do;
The song of mockingbird and wren,
A surge of hope in hearts of men!

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IN THE EYES OF THE BEHOLDER

Beauty is such a myriad thing:
The warming gold of a wedding ring;
The blushing pink of a baby's cheek,
Or the towering top of a mountain peak;
The blinding white of falling snow,
Or the spiraled trails as whirlwinds blow;
The vivid colors of the coral snake,
The winding ribbons highways make
As they dip from valley to highest hill;
The rush of waterfalls that spill
In liquid silver down rough hillsides.
Beauty is myriad, and it often glides
Into our view as some fragile thing
Like heaven-strewn dust from an angel's wing.

NOCTURNAL SCENE

Golden lanterns in the sky
Lighting up the world at night,
Flashing low and flashing high,
Making darkness gay and bright.
Twinkling lights from worlds afar
Fill the sky with tint and hue,
Lightning bugs and evening star...
Yellow gold on azure blue.

SON OF THE SOIL

This is my land, my native soil,
That gives me food and drink;
I find a rest from earthly toil,
A rest ... and time to think ...

The mellow earth is just the thing
To soothe the aches of life;
The freshness of the early spring
Blots out all pain and strife.
Let every man who views this scene
Forget all grudge and hate,
With tranquil beauty so serene
Let minor issues wait.

Give me the land, my native sod,
And let me till the ground,
For peace, a heritage from God,
Can surely here be found.

GREETINGS, BY PROXY

Plumaged beauty, near the window,
Wake her with your morning song;
Rouse her to the world's bright splendor,
Sing my love, both loud and long.

Tell her of my fond affection,
Ask if she has memories too;
Sing, and bid her gay good-morning,
Mockingbird, I ask of you!

RENAISSANCE

In calm repose the good earth lay
On Nature's broad and friendly breast,
Reclined in still and dormant rest,
Awaiting signs of coming day.

And then, as if by quick command,
The wind began in sudden squall
To hold the world in vast appall
At magic works by Nature's hand.

When overnight, it seemed, the scene
Too on a dozen colors -- bright
Fresh greens of leaf, and white
Of drifting clouds with sky between.

Entranced, we watched the majestic rebirth
Of this, our sphere, our Mother Land,
And marvelled how the All-Wise planned
To give this spring debut to earth.

BOUQUETS

Flowers
Are not preserved
With cut blossoms or pressed
Petals, but when their perfume drifts
Windward.

DISPLACED FARMERETTE

The soothing sound of tick-tick-tock,
The cricket's chirp so near;
The bullfrog's croak in yonder pond:
These are the sounds I hear.
In far-off woods I hear a wail--
A lonely screech-owl weeps.
In other rooms, the muffled snores
Tell me the whole house sleeps.
And as I muse, the sounds all blend
Into a wistful sigh.
Ah, homesick lass, I dream too much
--While streetcars rumble by.

AUTUMN QUEST

With brush and easel in my hand
I went into an autumn grove;
I sought a sketch of fairyland
And thought to find it near a cove.
I trampled on the falling leaves
And listened to the sound they made;
The branches hung like drooping eaves,
Where elfin shadows played.
I gazed, enrapt. This lovely spot
Was far beyond my artist's brush.
I tried and tried, but I could not
Depict this wood so green and lush.

FRUSTRATION

A robin's song, one early morn,
Aroused me from my dreams,
And called me out to dig and plant,
Inspired by sunny gleams.
I raked the leaves and sifted soil,
And gently placed the seed;
I hummed a tune and felt relieved:
March winds must retrocede.
But in the night Jack Frost returned
And breathed his icy blast;
One robin's song may portend Spring,
--But Spring does not come fast!

UNTRODDEN WAYS

I long to tread along the paths
No other feet have trod,
To feel beneath my world-worn feet
The rough, grass-covered sod.
I long to roam the hills and dales
And not a human meet,
In nature's hidden scenic spot
I find a safe retreat.
Along untraveled ways and roads
I long to tread and roam,
And when the evening sun goes down
Return to you -- and home.

SONNET TO NATURE

Darkness fell upon the shoulders of the earth;
Fell and settled down as snugly as a cloak.
Moon and stars were hid in clouds. The croak
Of frogs in lowland swamps, as if in mirth,
Broke the silence; thick, dark clouds gave birth
To heavy peels of thunder. Then, amain,
The heavens opened up, and cleansing rain
Came down to irrigate the thirsty earth.

What miracle is this, O Mighty God,
That gives us sustenance and drink
So we may bask in ample store?
Such wealth we have in this resourceful sod
That if we would but pause to think,
We could not justly ask for more.

BIRTH

A seed was dropped in desert sand
And, warmed by rays of sun,
It swelled and burst,
And breathless beauty was begun.
The flaming dart from Cupid's bow
Struck hearts, for years forlorn,
Took root and grew,
And everlasting love was born.

EVENING VOICES

In the stillness of the sunset,
Just before the grey dusk falls,
We can hear the voice of Nature
In the lonesome, low bird calls.

Far across the open cornfields,
Sounds the voice of Whippoorwill;
Is he calling to his loved one
In the tree upon the hill?

We hear the whirr of insects beating
Brittle wings against the screen;
Comes now the muted chorus ...
This is the hour between.

MIRRORED MEMORIES

October brings an opal mist
That settles on the world,
Like flags with mingled colors that
Are windswayed and unfurled.
The red is deep-bright cochineal,
The yellow almost maize;
And shimmering shades of green
That cool the half-warm days.
Across the sky the view is dim,
A tangy smoky-blue --
And in this deep halo I see
A portrait, dear, of you.

SEEDTIME AND HARVEST

March came in with a boisterous roar...
All through the month the incessant rain
Deluged the earth. Men, heartsore,
Began to murmur and complain.
"Too wet to plow." ... "Will it never stop?"
These bitter laments were heard.
"I fear that we shall miss a crop."
A statement that was most absurd.
If we doubting humans would but see,
And worry not about our Father's reign,
But leave our fate and troubles in His hand,
This world a better place would be.
For seedtime and harvest still remain
Subject to God's all-wise command.

SPRING DANCE

Meadows thick with purple daisies
On a shining green background,
Glowing beds of yellow jonquils,
Blazing colors all around.
Orchards filled with falling petals
Drifting downward from the trees;
Hark! I hear the step of Springtime
As she waltzes through the breeze.

SUMMER'S DESCENT

The autumn days are with us now,
And frost is in the air;
The barns are filled with corn and hay,
And cotton fields are bare.

We smell the twang of 'possum grapes
As winds blow sharp and cool;
The children don gay-colored wraps
As they rush off to school.

Each gust of wind brings whirling leaves
Across a withered lawn,
As if, by force, this wintry gale
Bright Summer would dethrone.

HOME BODY

I like to visit folks in town
Or spend the day with friends,
I like to take a Sunday drive
To see where some road ends.

I like to ride along the vales
And travel over hills;
The beauties of the countryside
Can bring me joyous thrills;
But when the sun begins to set
I'll seek another lane:
The path we've walked together, love,
That leads me home again.

ON CLIMBING A FIRE TOWER

With labored breath I climbed the steps
That led me up the tower's height.
The structured steel, like naked bones,
Was evidence of human might.
An engineer, with pad and pen,
Made plans; while men of greater brawn,
With rivet, blade, and mighty force,
Created this cold, lifeless spawn.
I reached the top and turned to view
The countryside of midget trees;
How small the world would look to me
From this towering, steel trapeze.

A purple veil half-hid the earth.
It seemed I viewed strange foreign lands;
The autumn-green of nature's growth
Encompassed all with velvet hands.
Autos, like insects, crawled about
On criss-cross roads and narrow lanes;
Majestic hills that pierced the skies
Were scalloped by soft-curving plains.
This wondrous scene made me aware
That mortals see but through a haze,
And we can barely glimpse the world
That waits beyond our earth-bound days.

WINTER

Dame Nature waved her magic wand
And gave the world a silver hue;
The trees, the shrubs, the fences, all
Hung heavy with the icy dew.

The stately pine, the giant oak,
The pear tree in the lane,
Bow down in humble silence
As if feeling power wane.

The young pines in the meadow,
Like statues by a tomb,
Lift high their frozen branches:
It is Winter -- in full bloom!

DISCOVERY*

I opened up a rosebud
And read a poem there ---
The beauty of the sunlight,
The purity of air,
The velvet of the petals
In tinted loveliness,
The kiss of morning dew,
The breezes' soft caress ...
When Nature forms a poem
My feeble pen must fall,
For with her perfection
I can't compete at all.

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HAPPINESS HILL

I know a place of solitude
Where peace and quiet rule supreme;
A perfect spot for rendezvous ...
Or just a place to sit and dream.

A hill that stands against the sky,
Is flanked by marching cedar trees
Where silent shadows beckon us
To come and sit within their lees.

Or better yet, come climb the peak,
Its rugged, sloping sides ascend,
To stand above the common things
And toss our troubles to the wind!

FREE REIGN

Give me a home in a country lane
With a clear blue sky overhead;
Spare me the city that is cold and vain,
Where neighboring spirits are dead.

Let me live in the wide open spaces
And breathe air that is fresh and pure;
Don't hold me back in city traces ...
I've got to be free -- that's for sure!

MAGNOLIA DREAMS

A massive trunk, full-leaved in
 polished green,
Star-studded with primeval bloom,
In summer twilight barely can be seen,
Yet fills the air with rare perfume.

The arching, knotted branches hanging
 low
Attest the age of this old tree;
A stalwart sentinel of long ago,
It stands in grand nobility.

Short-lived, the withered blooms upon
the ground
That graced these limbs now die forlorn;
Yet dreaming hearts through countless
years have found
As old dreams fade, new hope is born.

SUPREME DOMINIUM

God formed the earth, the sky, the seas;
And then, to man, He said: "Take these;
They're yours throughout your earthly span.
You have dominium, that is the plan."

Man conquered first the forest's glen;
Wild beasts became his food, and then,
The trees he took for homes. The waves
Of sea, with slap of oar, were slaves.

All known resource has been subdued,
But mankind's faith is not renewed;
He grumbles at his lot on earth
And curses God who gave him birth.

Will selfish man destroy the whole,
Then ask the Master to console
With miracles, as in the day
He gave to man a Master's way?

Man has forgot the major plan:
God has dominium over man!

STILL WATERS

There is beauty in the summer,
After darkness cools the earth,
And the katydids are humming
In a sound akin to mirth.

In the west the lightning flashes
As a cloud moves into view,
And the sun beyond the skyline
Casts on it a rosy hue.

All the world is still and peaceful,
As if at rest in quiet sleep;
And I, alone, heart filled with yearning,
Know still water runneth deep.

*QUESTING**

I walked along the cobbled street
That rang with hurrying, scurrying feet;
No one looked up to smile or nod ...
This was no place to look for God.

Along a grassy lane I sped,
Into the wooded glen it led;
I stood among the towering trees ...
And heard His voice along the breeze.

I sat beneath the shade to rest,
With Nature's beauty I was blessed;
To pen this scene I have no words ...
But I found God among the birds.

.....

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LIFE IMMORTAL

In Autumn days, when friends lament
That Winter soon will come,
It's then that I embrace the world
And feel adventuresome.
I like to roam the vivid woods
And marvel at the sight
Of Mother Nature making plans
To bed her earth-born for the night.
It seems this process is a sign
To us, when faith grows weak,
That God on High, foreseeing such,
Through Nature does bespeak;
For this we know, without a doubt,
The trees will leaf again,
And He who makes the whole earth live
Will do no less for mortal men.

THE FIELD OF THOUGHT

The mind, like this good clean earth,
Is a gift of God:
Ours to use, to cultivate
Through the sowing of good seeds.
Let us tend and feed the plants,
And learn to sort the wheat from tares.
Lord, give us strength to wield wisely
The hoe of prudence and knowledge,
To cut out the weeds of petty hates,
Of bitter jealousies and fears,
That we may reap Thy golden fruit
Of mercy and Eternal Life.

STAR OF HOPE

The Christ-child underneath the Star
Brought promise of a worldly peace;
He came from heavenly lands afar
To give a sin-bound world release.

Though mortal man the wars must fight
While grasping kings hold sway,
Soon lust and greed must bow to right --
"This, too, shall surely pass away."

On Christmas night we scan the skies
To find the star on which we dream;
The Christ-child soon will come again
And peace will rule on earth, supreme.

RAPE OF THE CHOOKATONCHEE REGION

On the banks of the Chookatonchee,
Here in eastern Mississippi,
Once the Indian warrior hunted,
Roamed the woods with bow and arrow,
Slew, when needed, furry creatures,
Used the meat to feed his papoose,
Took the skin for coat and wigwam,
From the bones made decorations,
Utilized the fruits of nature.
Then the white man came and settled;
Cut the timber for his cabins,
Stole the hiding place of wildlife,
Shot, for sport, the deer and turkey;
Turned the grasses from the sunshine,
Ravished all the fertile acres,
Bled the soil and left a wasteland.

Now, the West Winds mourn the passing
Of the Indian and the farmer,
Desolate, they search the barrens,
Seeking for the verdant forest
That the white man cut and wasted.
Rain and snow melt down the hillsides,
Rolling waters flood the lowlands.
Gone the wigwam and the cabin,
Gone the Indian and the plowman,
Grieving are the fields and meadows
Through which winds the Chookatonchee;
Weep, oh weep, oh Mississippi!

NEW GROWTH*

I watched moist, dark earth turn upward
Toward the sun, as the plow's sharp edge
Cut swift and clean. Young shoots of tender
grass

Disappeared beneath ribboned mounds
That soon would be the grave of sleeping seeds.
Looking back, I saw my life, thus heaped over
By furrows of care and sorrow, lying smothered,
Cold and damp; then, as I visioned plants
Of green soon to burst from this bare earth,
And their prolific growth into fields of beauty,
I knew that, somewhere within my being,
Lie dormant seeds of love and friendship;
And within the receptacle of a warm heart
They, too, can break the husk and burst forth
Into new life, new growth, to cover
The barren spots left by the plowshare of time.

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The bending of twigs....

SPRING FEVER

When the sun shines on the daisies
And the grass comes peeping through,
When the warmth of early springtime
Turns the frost to gentle dew,
It is then I look with longing
Toward the mill-pond down the road,
And the school books that I carry
Become such a heavy load.
School days seem to be much longer,
But one day soon without a doubt,
All the children will be happy
When the teacher says: "School's out!"

OUR THANKS TO THEE

We thank Thee, God, for daily bread,
For the stars that twinkle overhead,
For soil to grow the farmers' crops,
For bright sunshine and warm raindrops.
We thank Thee for the clothes we wear,
For friends and loved ones everywhere;
But most of all, with one accord,
We thank Thee for the Risen Lord.

FOR THE BIRDS

I took a ride in an airplane,
Up in the sky so high;
I felt just like the birdies feel
When they first learn to fly!

The houses on the ground below
Were awfully tiny-built,
And father's corn and cotton fields
Looked like a patchwork quilt.

I was a wee bit scared, of course.
Home looked so far away.
If it's all the same to you, my friends,
Upon the ground I'll stay!

BARNYARD BABIES - I

Tiny balls of breathing fur,
In a bed of straw, astir;
Eyes still closed; nose so soft;
Up there in the old barn loft
There will soon be snarlin' and spittin'
...But nothing is sweet as a newborn
kitten!

BARNYARD BABIES - II

Wobbly legs, so long and slender;
Short pink nose, soft and tender;
Coat of glistening-wet red hair;
A white spot here, another there;
Crying for his mother-dear,
Our new baby calf is here!

SINKING SONG

Wild waves rock my fragile boats
And foam climbs thick and high,
Yet there is no stormy sea about,
Nor other ships nearby.

I am not frightened or sea-sick,
I am not where you think;
My boats are but my dishes,
Which I'm washing in the sink.

THE SPIDER

I watched a spider as he sped
While working on his home and bed;
He spun his web with utmost care,
As women hang their clothes to air.
He darted in and out his den,
Spun twice around and back again;
Obtaining food by hook or crook,
He asks no dame to be his cook;
He is a self-sustaining soul,
But fear of him I can't control!

PRAISE GOD

The mighty oak, the stately elm,
The weeping willow too,
The lithesome pine, the feathery fir
And lovely spruce, green-blue...
These trees of earth all lift their arms
To praise Almighty God,
Who gives them life and beauty
And food from His fertile sod.
All boys and girls, and adults too,
Like praise to Him should give;
He sent His Son on earth to die
That all of us might live.

WHO AM I?

My home is in Africa's wild jungles,
But I am also in the zoo,
And with large and lovely eyes
I'll stand and look at you.
You'll think I am a funny thing
When you see my pacing walk;
And though my neck is very long,
I'm never heard to talk.
I'm the tallest animal in the world,
You'd never reach me with a staff;
My skin is spotted like a leopard,
But my friends know I am a -----,*

*Giraffe.

RAINY DAY FRIENDS

I love to see a rainy day,
Although I can't go out to play,
For then a friend is sure to call;
He, too, must like to watch rain fall.
He never comes inside the house,
And he is quiet as any mouse.
The damp leaves are his welcome mat,
He wears no raincoat, no rain hat.
We play no games, nor speak no words,
Sometimes he chases all the birds.
He eats his lunch the same as I,
But he eats underneath the sky.
He sits a-top the hickory tree
And waves his bushy tail at me.
I love to see a rainy day,
For then my Squirrel-friend comes to
play!

PLAYMATES

I have a little dog
That runs and plays with me;
He likes to chase my kitty cat
And run it up a tree.

But when time comes to eat,
My kitten and my pup
Are friends again ... until
They eat the food all up!

VISITING THE ZOO

My daddy took me to the zoo
To see the tall giraffe;
With such long legs, it seems to me
He needs a walking staff!

And in a cage, to keep him safe,
I saw a big black bear;
He sat up on his two hind legs
And did not need a chair!

The monkeys played on slides and swings,
And begged for peanuts too;
What fun I have when Dad takes me
To visit at the zoo!

GOD'S HANDIWORK

God's voice is in the thunder
That rolls across a storm,
His touch is in the raindrops
That fall so soft and warm.

And in the rays of sunlight
We see His glorious smile
That brightens up the beauty
Around us all the while.

The heavens declare His glory,
And we should rejoice in heart
That in His precious kingdom
We have a blessed part.

Dew of little things...

PASSING THE BUCK

My fiction's dull, my verse is slack,
And the bread box almost bare;
My neighbor's son is wedding soon,
And I've no new dress to wear.

What would they think of me, should I,
Just for a humorous quip,
Return that lovely embossed card
With a cool rejection slip?

IT'S PAPA WHO PAYS

"Necessity is the mother of invention,"
Is an adage I've heard all my life;
But I'll bet that Necessity's husband
Did a lot of work for his wife.

THE LIGHT OF LIFE

A pale flower stood in the shade of a tree
And pined for the warmth of the sun's bright rays;
Weakly she stood, and longed to be free
From the shadow that held her imprisoned for days.

Along came a woodsman and cut down the tree
And brought the pale flower out of the shade;
She blossomed to beauty; it seemed that she said:
"This is the warmth for which long I have prayed."

We, like the flower, cannot live without light,
Without warmth and kind, loving care;
And somewhere in life that sunlight is waiting,
Sent by the Master, in answer to prayer.

PARFUM LAUNDRE

There's the fragrance of Avon and D'Orsay,
Labeled *Nearness*, *Black Satin*, and *Mist*;
And *Arpege*, *Cotillion* and *Wind Song*
Often cause fair maidens to be kissed.

These powerful and provocative perfumes
Are as heady as imported wine;
But the scent I'd like to have bottled
Comes from a sun-kissed wash on the line.

DREAMS

It is strange to think that dreaming
Gives one courage to go on,
To struggle through hardships and trials,
To proudly say, "I won."

How pleasant, when the rain
Beats down upon the low housetop,
To sit and dream and plan,
And never hear a single drop.

And then, when things go wrong,
When friends fail to understand,
It is soothing to the open wound
To review the things we've planned.

FACETIOUS FEMALES

All women-gossips are quite droll;
They make me lose my self-control;
For when they on a story dwell
And want to be the first to tell,
They cry: "Don't breathe this to a soul!"

THE OLD STONE MILL

I stood by the wheel of the old stone mill
And looked on the waters below,
And with each wave of the shimmering stream
Flashed scenes from the days long ago.

Once more I climbed up the crude stone steps
Into the house by the side of the wheel,
I listened again to the rumbling stones,
And smelled the fresh odor of warm corn meal.
By the old miller's side I spent happy hours,
Content and secure, and filled with great joy,
But now the freedom of this countryside
A war-torn world threatens to destroy.

The faith of my youth returned to me then,
And my heart beat with rapturous thrill,
For I trust that God will help us to keep
The peace symbolized by the old stone mill.

EXPERIENCE

Funny thing, an aching tooth
Pounds and throbs the whole night through;
But when I reach the dentist's chair
The darn thing's good as new!

INSUFFICIENT FUNDS

He offered her the moon and stars on gilded plate,
The wondrous love of life that comes too late;
She loved the tender words he used so well,
His gentle touch was one that rung the golden bell;
With him, the world was always silver-mist ...
His close embrace ... the night they kissed ...
All memories to light the lonely days
When he and she would walk their separate ways;

He offered her the moon and stars ...
romantic stuff ...
But she said, "No, my dear, the moon is
not enough!"

SPRING TURNOVER

Now that we've finished this year's cleaning,
We feel quite pleased with ourselves.
All the junk laid out for discarding
Has been neatly placed back on the shelves.

WHERE CREDIT'S DUE

Men should admit a woman's handy...
Her life's not all mere cake and candy.
She sweeps, she dusts, she bakes, and washes,
And picks up hubby's wet galoshes;
She hangs his trousers, hides his shoes,
And soothes away his moods and blues;
She answers letters from the kin,
'Cause he's no good with ink and pen;
She hunts his hankies, darns his socks,
And listens while he scolds and knocks;
She fixes him a bedtime snack,
And pats his pillow, rubs his back;
Then closes windows, locks the doors,
And lies awake while hubby snores!

SWEET TALK

Although wives are fond of words
And they can talk for hours,
They much prefer that husbands
Reply with sweets and flowers.

ALL IN THE PACE

Some writers like to drag along
With words that are dull and sad,
When no one cares for gloomy tales,
Or verse that's trite and bad.

Others bring in ample checks
With cheerful words that they employ...
Words that are gay and happy,
That love and laugh and leap for joy!

HARRIED HOSTESS

I like visitors ...
They are lots of fun.
But why can't they come
When my work's all done?

IF I HAD A SON

My boys are all girls,
And I love them it is true;
But if I had a son
There is much I would do:
I would buy him a pony
And teach him to ride;
We would roam the dense hills
With him as my guide.
I would rent a bare acre
And buy packets of seeds,
With him as the farmer
To keep down the weeds;
And when he grew older,
With childhood was done,
He would escort his sisters
And join in their fun.
And when the time came
That my son took a wife,
I'd resign .. with gratitude
For sharing his life.

BLANK BORES

Of all the people in my day,
A few I surely dread --
Those who gush, "You *don't* say?"
To what I have just said!

TUSITALA
(*"Teller of Tales"*)

Atop Mount Vaea, no petronel
Will break the silence loved so well;
The kindness shown Samoan clan
By you, is broad enough to span
The skies, the seas, the alien earth,
Back to the land that gave you birth,
To form a brotherhood of men,
That others may take up their pen,
Record the stories that unfold,
As great as those you wrote and told.
While South Seas murmur tranquil song,
The natives stand, a guardian strong,
To shield the hill; let peace abound;
Tusitala sleeps in hallowed ground!

.....

(Robert L. Stevenson was affectionately known as 'Tusitala' by the natives with whom he spent the last years of his life on Samoa Island. At his death, the natives buried Stevenson on top of Mount Vaea and ordered that no fire-arms should ever disturb his sleep.)

ELIZABETH BARRET BROWNING

How faithfully her marriage vows were held!
She was so grateful for the joys they spelled.
With a courage, God-given, in her frailest hour
She was sweetly submissive to her own love's power.
(She had written of this love in which she believed.)
And she gave it her all, and proudly conceived
Like Sarah in the Biblical days of the past.
True, her clay did crumble, but her dream will last.
Elizabeth, the poetess who wrote with intuition,
A record of beauty that is found in love's fruition.

LAND OF MAGNOLIAS

What do we have to boast about, below the
Mason-Dixon line?
What do we have in this Sunny South that we
claim to be so fine?
Why, there's joy, and love, and laughing
hearts
To help us on life's way...
There's the song of birds, the green of
trees
From morn till close of day.
There are simple things we've learned to love,
There's the handclasp of a friend;
These simple joys will cheer us on
From birth to journey's end.

CORONATION

Let deck the house with posies bright
And lay the velvet carpet down;
Prepare the throne with cushions light;
Attendant, bring the royal crown.

This is the day of royalty
For matriarchs within our homes...
In humble shacks, in rural lee,
Or under august mansions' domes.

With love and honor and respect
To form the wreath's imperial parts,
Majestic rites we will perfect
By crowning Mother Queen of Hearts.

FREE ENTERTAINMENT

The kids demand a TV set,
But dollars come too slow,
And friends downstairs see that we get
A bell-clear audio.

Now, if the folks across the street
Will turn their screen this way,
We'll see and hear the TV shows
And never have to pay.

OLD WOUNDS

There should have been gladness
 and lightness of heart,
For falling in love is life's major
 art;
With heart-strings resounding the
 notes of true love,
And birds sweetly singing in the
 blue skies above.
Instead--there was coldness ... my
 heart skipped a beat ...
The fear of the moment out-measured
 the sweet;
My heart said, "Embrace it; this new
 world explore."
My head said, "Reject it; you were
 hurt once before."

SANS SOU

There was a young lady, a Sioux,
Whose lovers were more than a fioux;
 But the Redskins she flaunted;
 It was greenbacks she wanted,
And these bucks were of the wrong hioux!

YOUR WEDDING DAY

Today the whole world's bright ...
It is your wedding day!
Reach out and grasp the happiness,
And clasp it close to stay.
Catch all the moments as they pass
And drain them of their fun;
Count not the time as fleeting years,
But days ... lived one by one.
Days crammed full of joyful times
And weeks of happy life;
Congenial pals ... companions, true,
Not merely 'man and wife.'
So keep it bright, this world of yours,
Forget the cloudy weather,
There is a port in every storm
And you've found yours--together!

CREAM PUFF

As a rule, a man's no fool,
But a girl makes him a rookie;
A pretty smile, a bit of guile,
And he crumbles like a cookie.

RICHES

It isn't nice to boast, I know,
Nor tell of all your wealth;
We're taught to value riches
Not by cash assets, but health.
But somehow I like to tell
Of all that I possess,
To wonder if I have not more
Than some could ever guess:
A lot of friends, a wealth of love,
A virtual purse of joys to share,
The actual dollar-count of which
I neither know nor care.
In sharing joys with these friends
I find I'm richly blessed,
Even though I dine on crusts
And am in plainest cotton dressed.

BARBS

Cactus
Rebuffs our touch
With prickly spines that wound.
A heart, once broken hides behind
Barbed words.

BRAVE?

You surely cannot think that I
Am brave or strong, my dear;
I am so far from being such
My every move is one of fear.

It is not strength that
Keeps my feet aground--
Only the trembling fear
That I shall be frowned
Upon. No part of bravery
Holds my head up high--
Only the fear that those
I pass shall see me cry.

I, brave? Ah, no, my friend;
I am so humbly weak and small,
I grasp your love the tighter
For fear that I shall fall.

NON-CENTS

I cling to my pennies and nickels,
And yet it's impossible to save;
High prices put a dent in my budget
Which is more like a permanent wave.

FLOWERS TO THE LIVING

Who is it travels far and wide,
Small black satchel by his side?

--Our doctor.

He goes in wind and storm and rain
To quiet our nerves and ease our pain,

--This doctor.

He listens to us gripe and groan,
He may have troubles of his own
But never tries to make them known,

--Our doctor.

He's on the go early and late,
And never fails to keep a date,
But do we appreciate

--The doctor?

RAT RACE

I'm keeping up with the Joneses,
But I have no peace of mind,
Because I know my creditors
Are but one jump behind.

MISSISSIPPI, LAND OF PROMISE*

Mississippi, land of promise,
Where the rich magnolias grow,
And the sun shines ever brighter
On each fluffy-cotton row.

Mississippi, land of plenty,
Where good cooking is our pride:
Ham and biscuits, red-eyed gravy,
And fried chicken on the side.

Mississippi, land of welcome,
Where there's room enough for all,
And our doors are always open
When our neighbors come to call.

Mississippi, land of courage,
Where we look for better ways
To improve the world about us,
While we give to God the praise.

Mississippi, land of promise,
Where the rich magnolias grow;
State of deltas and of redlands,
There's no finer place I know!

**(May be sung to the tune of CLEMENTINE)*

DOGGONE INTELLECTUAL

Bumper, Junior, is our pup,
Who eats all our magazines up;
A canine habit, quite contrary,
Which proves our pup is litter-ary.

MOUNTAINS AND MOLEHILLS

Weighed down by cares and heavy-hearted,
Quietly I sat by a dusty road;
All love of life had long departed
And doubts and fears increased my load.

A tender breeze along the roadside
Swept little grains of sand around,
Gathering them into miniature mountains
To level again to quiescent ground.

Lulled and rested by the breezes,
I cast my fears into the air,
For the Ruler of earth and heaven
Had leveled the mountain of my care.

BUSY OR BORED

For writing rhyme, I've little time
Or patience to be wasted.
There's joys of life and idle strife
Awaiting to be tasted.

At writing verse I'm even worse;
My friends drop in, galore,
And while they joke, I'm going broke,
'Cause I can't write no more !

A golden sanctuary...

SUBMISSION

With searching eyes you held my glance,
The world stood still around,
As if we two, caught in a trance,
Were wrapped in thoughts profound.
You took my hand and drew it close,
The flame of love flowed through
Two hearts that beat with one accord,
And pledged that they were true.
The moment was a lovers' tryst,
As mate to mate was drawn;
In sweet submission to this love
We'll find a bright new dawn!

WINGED DREAMS

Iron bars
May hold your feet
Inside drab walls; but hearts
Can scale the heights against all odds
And dream.

AUTUMN OF LIFE

When budding flowers herald Spring,
And earth's new dress is made,
When youthful hearts begin to sing
And first romance is laid...

This is the theme of poets' song,
When dawn of year they see,
But we must prove that they are wrong..
Else what is left for you and me?

I see more beauty in the Fall
When nature blends to gold;
I seem to hear some ardent call
Of placid joys untold.

I think that blissfulness be such
In love that comes so late;
I'd hope to find that gentle touch
In my own autumn mate.

LOVE MUST HAVE SPACES

I placed your love in the recess
Of my heart, and pressed it close
With all the crowding memories,
Like a rose between pages
Of a novel on the shelf.
One lonely day I felt the need
Of your comforting touch,
And sought to bring you to my side...

But fragrant blossoms do not belong
Inside a weighted darkness,
Shut away from air and sun,
From the kiss of morning dew;
Your love, like the rose,
Was faded into nothingness,
And I knew you were unhappy,
Needing more space to breathe.

With smiling lips, I recalled
Your undemanding love. Contritely,
I opened the door of my heart
And freed you from its velvet cage.
Suddenly, my world became brighter,
Aglow with the selfless light
You brought into my narrow life,
And I felt a breeze--gentle and soft--
As your spirit lifted ... on wings of love!

LOVE-TRYST

From turquoise canopy of sky
The sun beamed rays of burnished gold,
And purple grace of pansy shy
Gave beauty, breathless to behold.
Love-laden winds in soft caress
Moved down the velvet country lane,
And we, in first-known happiness,
Knew thrills akin to yearning pain.
The sylvan scene was made complete
When, in this treasured trysting-place,
From gentle lips the story sweet
Unfolded, in your warm embrace.

EFFULGENCE

Your voice,
Like a warm ray
Of light, penetrates dark
Corners of my heart with the torch
Of love.

LOVE'S CLOAK

The winter wind unleashes icy breath;
The world is drab and gray, as if in death
Its pulsing heart is still.

Inside our door, beside the glowing light
Of fire, we find love lives, so warm and bright
There is no feel of chill.

Blow on, wild winter winds, and through
 your storm
The cloak of love's embrace will keep us
 warm.

HEART-KEEPING

The ceilings may be dusty,
And cobwebs in the door,
The walls in need of cleaning
And litter on the floor;
The windows may have smudges
That mar an outside view,
And all the chairs and tables
Will doubtless be askew;
The toast will have black edges
(I am an awful cook!)
And like a tattered scare-crow
I'll grace the breakfast nook;
Your pride in home will suffer
For housekeeping is not my art;
But I'll do my best to fill
The corners of your heart.

LAND OF DREAMS

A star's bright rays dipped into sight
Through wakefulness of cloud-hung night;
With eager hands I reached aloft
And caught the gleam so golden-soft.

Like magic carpet, this twinkling star
Sailed through space to lands afar;
My lonely heart grew light and gay
As doubts and fears were swept away.

Up to the clouds I flew, and stopped;
Into your arms was gently dropped;
You caught me close (your touch was warm)
As if to shield me from all harm.

Your lips to mine, so gently pressed,
Bespoke an end to ceaseless quest;
In this close-sheltered, star-lit cove
We found our hidden treasure-trove.

Was I bewitched by transient beams,
Or can there be a land of dreams
Where lovers meet in sweet caress,
To find their hearts' true happiness?

FAR-REACHING STAR

What miracle is wrought
That one small star
Can cast its light so far?

Is this the warmth I've sought,
Its golden beams
A light for lonely dreams?

And has God willed it so,
That over the miles
This dazzling star still smiles

With captivating glow,
And calls a heart
From distant worlds apart?

Then through the lonely night
When we, alone,
Await the dawn,

This star's inspiring light
Will fill the dark
With love's inflaming spark.

ANTICIPATION

As time grows short and I grow tense
With eagerness to see you, dear,
It seems the day will never come
When your caressing voice I'll hear.
I long to look into your eyes
And see my love reflected there;
To know the waiting time has fled
And we, at last, our dreams can share.
Oh, Sweetheart mine, I want to be
Held closely in your firm embrace,
To hear you say your love is true...
That my heart has found its resting place.

THE LAST LOVE OF SUMMER

I caught from my window a faint gleam of color
Among the dullness of chaff and dry weed;
As frost of the year crept close with its coldness,
This last bit of loveliness filled my heart's need.
Now like the warmth of late love is the flower ...
Love that comes just before life's frost ...
Bringing once more a cheer to the persons
Who feel that with aging all will be lost.
Your love brought to me a glow of fair beauty,
Lighting the darkness of fast-spinning years,
Now I can meet them with lightness and laughter,
Love will embrace me ... there's no need for tears!

TO DRIK

You passed my way, and paused
To gently smile; looking into my eyes
You saw an emptiness.
Into my unawakened, fertile heart
You sowed a seed of love,
Which, with the warmth of answering emotion,
Took root and grew
Until it knew no bounds.
It wrapped its tendrils around the soul
Of my being, and instead of sapping
The life therein,
It fed and nurtured my heart; uplifted
My frail spirit, and gave strength
To a life devoid of warmth and purpose.
This growing plant filled the empty corners
Of my heart and life, and instilled in me
A consuming desire --
To give back to life the love you gave to me.

FRUITION

A rose
In bud unfolds
Beneath warm rays of sun.
My life nurtured by quiet love,
Flowers.

TO AN ABSENT LOVE

Though I may walk on wooded trails,
See beauty spots, breathe pure, fresh air,
My feet are shackled, my eyes bedimmed,
Till you, my love, these joys can share.
Ambrosial food and sparkling wine
May load my board in festive weight;
I cannot relish food nor drink
While you have no selective plate.
Implicit rest that I once knew
No longer comes to grace the night;
Until you sleep in comfort, dear,
My dreams are only empty fright.
The world is such a dismal place
While we are far apart;
I only live for that glad day
When you return, Sweetheart.

LOVE'S HIGHWAY

I'd walk alone, I thought;
Companions bring intrusion
Upon a heart still fraught
With saddest disillusion.
For years the path was filled
With rocks and dire mischances;
And then--we met--and thrilled
To dreams of lovers' fancies.
And now, the road ahead,
Gold-paved with rainbow edges,
Invites two souls to tread
Paths lined with hearts' true pledges.

YOUR PHOTO

I see a need for loving in your face--
That haunting loneliness I will erase;
Your tender eyes bespeak a sweet caress,
Your lips hold promise of rare gentleness.
I long to touch your virile handsome cheek,
To see your waking smile, to hear you speak;
I want to drink the nectareous wine
Of love; to kiss the alluring laugh-line
So near your mouth. I'd like to lean upon
Your strong shoulders, and never be alone.
I yearn to feel the warmth and nascent thrill
Of your embrace, when we, at last, fulfill
The love that's born of ardent eagerness
To find our life's conjugal happiness.
I love you, darling, love you -- need you so!
All this I see, I feel, I surely know;
As I look at your photo and dream, my dear,
I breathe a prayer that you'll soon be here.

DISAPPOINTMENT

Your letter failed to come today.
What can I say
To tell you how I feel?
The sun stands still, its glowing light,
Always so bright,
Has lost its gold-appeal.

There was a cause, of course (I know
It must be so),
That stayed your flowing pen.
My heart is still; its rhythmic beat
Awaits, my sweet,
Until you write again.

GENTLE HANDS

Fate brings so many cruel blows
That strike too deep for tears;
A wounded heart in sorrow knows
The pain that comes through fears.
With passing time my soul recoiled
From all who came to close,
For love, thus far, so vastly spoiled,
Had left me scared, morose.
Then like a gift from Heaven's door,
Comes one who understands;
My heart, once broken, bruised and sore,
Now rests in gentle hands.

THE MENDER

I wore my heart upon my sleeve,
And showed my love so bright and bold;
I did not know that hearts could tear,
Like cloth when it is worn and old.
The rent was wide, with jagged edge
That gaped, and showed the nakedness;
But then you came and patched the tear
With close-woven yards of happiness.

FULFILLMENT

The moment, dear, when we first met
I call to mind with no regret;
In breathless awe my heart stood still;
I waited for the wondrous thrill
Of your soft kiss and caress.
I loved you then, I must confess.
I love you now with deeper bliss,
For I have known a warmer kiss...
The shelter of your close embrace ...
The gentleness of love's true grace.
As I recall that joyous day
When we found love, I'm wont to pray,
To thank the Lord for all my life
That I am your beloved wife.